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former of these practices, and we need fear nothing for our mother tongue, while a general regard is paid to the precept expressed in the following couplet.

‘Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.’

ART. VIII.—*Oeuvres inédites de Madame la Baronne de Stael, publiées par son fils.* 3 vols. 8vo. Paris, Strasbourg et Londres. 1821.

THE celebrated Rembrandt, one of the principal ornaments of the Flemish school of painting, did not enjoy, in his lifetime, all the reputation which has since been attached to his name. Fame and fortune are capricious; and Rembrandt, in the pride of genius, neglected the courtly arts, that are sometimes necessary to obtain the favor of these charming divinities. He found himself, accordingly, with all his merit, in very imminent danger of starving: and in order to enhance the value of his pictures, and anticipate some of the advantages of a high posthumous reputation, he retired from public view, and circulated a report of his own death. No sooner was this sad event made known, than the hundred tongues of fame were immediately vocal in loud commendation of the departed painter: and what was more to his purpose, his pictures rose instantaneously in value, and were bought up with a sort of fury. After reaping this golden harvest, and disposing of all the pictures he had on hand, the artist returned to life, and resumed his labors with new alacrity, and increased contempt for the good sense and taste of the public. This anecdote has been wrought up by a French writer into a little comedy; and in order to give it the additional interest of a seasoning of gallantry, the painter's wife is represented as a second Penelope, besieged, like the queen of Ithaca, in consequence of the supposed death of her husband, by innumerable suitors. She is described, however, as not possessing quite the constancy of that ‘illustrious personage,’ and as not being wholly disinclined to anticipate also, in her own way, some of the advantages, that might be expected to result from her husband's actual decease, so that the poor painter has more reasons than one for making haste to return to life.

This little anecdote, true or false, serves to illustrate pleasantly enough the value of fame, and the uncertainty there is, whether the judgments of contemporaries will be annulled or confirmed by posterity. No writer of our own times has enjoyed, upon the whole, so extensive a reputation as Madame de Stael obtained in the latter part of her literary career. The productions of some others have been read with more pleasure, in smaller circles, or rated higher by a few judges who were able to appreciate them; but taking into view the extent of the public to which she addressed herself, as well as her success in obtaining its favor, it would be difficult to find a name that can come in competition with hers, since the time of Voltaire and Rousseau. Or if this should be contested, it will readily be granted by all, that she was one of the most popular writers of her time. Notwithstanding this, she had critics and very severe ones; nor has her death wholly silenced them, as it did those of the Flemish artist. We have seen but a few days since, in a German work of great merit, a solemn anathema against bad writers of various kinds, in which, among other denunciations equally severe, all Sapphos, Aspasias, and Corinnas, are sent, without ceremony, to the madhouse. This judgment savors too strongly in its rudeness as well as its severity, of the soil, and we imagine will not be confirmed, even by such critics in other countries as are less partial to the daughter of Necker. In fact, if we are rightly informed, although Madame de Stael was received with great attention in the higher circles of German society, the scholars of that country, who wield the sceptre of criticism, have never looked upon her with an eye of favor. Her learning appeared to them scanty and superficial, and quite insufficient to justify her in giving her opinions so freely as she did on large and difficult questions. Accustomed themselves to push their inquiries with an expense of much time and unwearied labor into the minutest details of fact, they are unwilling to acknowledge that these toils are unnecessary for the purpose of arriving at just conclusions: and that it is possible to reason correctly upon general subjects, by means of observations made exclusively on large masses and leading points. By French critics, on the contrary, Madame de Stael has been reproached with affecting too much the German taste, with indulging in vague and obscure modes of expression, with deviating from the pure and lucid perspicuity that distinguishes the best

French writers, and adopting the manner they call *romantic*, without precisely knowing themselves what they mean by this term. These objections refer to the style of her works, but the substance of them has also been freely handled. The moral in some has been regarded as loose, and in all as bordering on extravagance and mysticism. Her political philosophy has dissatisfied the zealots of every party. The republicans dislike her passion for 'historical names,' and the royalists her zeal for liberal institutions. Some quarrel with her hatred for Bonaparte and others with her passion for the British government. Meanwhile, these objections, in most of which there is a greater or less *degree of foundation*, did not prevent her reputation from extending itself regularly and rapidly up to the time of her death. Her name and merit were comparatively little known till the publication of *Corinna*. This work diffused her fame far and wide; and her subsequent more serious productions established it on solid foundations. Instead of outliving her reputation like some authors, and degenerating from the excellence of her earlier efforts, each book that she published was regularly more valuable than the one preceding, and her great posthumous work on the French revolution far excelled any she had previously written, and gave the last finish to her literary character.

It may be supposed by some, that the elevated social position of Madame de Stael, her rank, wealth, and titles, contributed something to her literary success; but this idea is not very plausible. Other ministers have had daughters besides M. Necker, and there have been baronesses of higher standing in the rolls of heraldry, and perhaps of larger fortunes, though hers was very great, whose names are never seen in a critical review. In fact, whatever could be done for Madame de Stael by the advantages of her birth and fortune, was effected at a very early period of her life, and we have seen that her reputation was principally the fruit of her later labors, performed at a time when she was persecuted, in exile, and comparatively poor. The remark of Pope, upon the great influence of high social standing in sanctifying dullness, like many others of his satirical sallies, has very little foundation. The rarity of great merit, whether in the loftiest or the lowest ranks of society, makes us perceive it, when it really exists there, with increased satisfaction: but if the public is disposed to be indulgent in either case, it seems to be rather to the

efforts of indigent, than of wealthy or dignified mediocrity. The Bloomfields obtained a sort of distinction by poems, which, had they been written by men of education, would have sunk without notice into forgetfulness. Hogg, and even Burns have been a good deal overrated, on account of the interest excited by their humble origin and small advantages ; while on the other hand the dunces have been uniformly more severely handled by critics and the public, in proportion to their rank and fortune. Lord Thurlow found no protection for affectation and nonsense in his own title, or the merit of his father ; and the earl of Carlisle's coronet did not secure him from the most unmerciful castigation by his own nephew, lord Byron,—more severe, perhaps, than mere unoffending dulness really deserved. Byron himself received for his hours of idleness a critical lashing, which did not seem to be inflicted with the less relish because it fell on patrician shoulders. In short, we apprehend that notwithstanding the efforts lately made in Europe to give the greatest possible prevalence to the doctrine of *legitimacy*, it has not yet obtained sway in literature, and if all the other governments in the world should assume a monarchical form, except the United States, we shall still have the *republic of letters* to keep us in countenance.

The principal merit of Madame de Stael's compositions is the poetical coloring of the language. Without having, perhaps, the best possible taste in style, she succeeds to a considerable extent in what she attempts. She is not satisfied with a merely natural and perspicuous expression of thought, which is, after all, the perfection of art, but aims assiduously and constantly at effect and brilliancy. She deals willingly in large and majestic forms of expression ; and this manner, however imposing when perfectly successful, borders too nearly on stiffness and affectation to be employed without considerable hazard. But Madame de Stael has avoided on the whole, with great skill and success, the principal faults into which her peculiar taste was likely to lead her ; and her language, though rich and elevated, is in general very flowing and easy. She has also throughout great spirit and vivacity. Her imagination enlivens every thing it touches ; and in the several departments of literature which she has attempted, such as historical and fictitious narrative, description of art and nature, the analysis of sentiment, and abstract speculation on

various branches of philosophy, she possesses the art of giving her compositions a high degree of interest. This is the true secret of literary success. An attractive style is not so much the clothing of thought, as the conductor of it. Without the intervention of this medium the communication is not formed between the minds of the writer and the public. His merit, whatever it is, cannot be felt or appreciated, because it is not known. *We live by style*, was an apophthegm of Voltaire, who had thoroughly studied his profession. To know how to write is indeed of necessity the first qualification of a good writer; and a mind, however rich in thought and feeling, can no more impart its treasures to the world, in the form of written composition, without possessing naturally, or acquiring by the necessary labor and study the arts of language, than it can pour them out upon canvass without initiating itself into the mysteries of painting. This remark may appear trite, but if it were as familiar in practice as it is in theory, the world would be spared at least ninety-nine out of a hundred of the books that are published.

But Madame de Stael, though possessed of a poetical mind, was not a poet. She had neither the perfection of style nor the force of imagination, both of which are required for this art. This is proved by the failure of all her attempts at poetry. Her essays in verse were wholly unsuccessful, and she was herself so conscious of it, that she did not publish them during her life. They now appear in the collection of her posthumous works; but whether the editor has shown his judgment in the publication of them is perhaps a question. They certainly add nothing to the reputation of Madame de Stael as a writer; but as her acquired fame does not rest in any degree upon these pieces, their inferiority can, of course, do her no injury; and it is agreeable, as a mere matter of curiosity, to see the attempts in verse of a person who has obtained so much celebrity in other walks of literature. These essays consist principally of two tragedies, which were among the very first of her compositions, and which are wholly destitute of any kind of merit. They have all the coldness and stiffness of the French school, without any of its high finish and elegance. There is no example in fact of a good poem of this importance, written at the age of seventeen or eighteen, when these were produced; and it is not impossible that the talent of Madame de Stael might have been brought by the necessary labor

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and discipline to the degree of perfection required for writing good poetry. But whether for want of this course of training, or from original inaptitude, her subsequent attempts are not much superior to the first; and the few of them that appear in this collection are wholly spiritless. The best things in this way are two or three little comedies, of the slightest possible pretension, written for representation at her own house at Copet, in the manner which the French call *dramatic proverbs*. These pieces are gay and pleasant; and show how far talent can go in trifling things, even without the regular discipline. They are written in prose.

Madame de Stael was not only incapable of writing in verse, but she wanted the vigor of imagination which constitutes the essential requisite of poetry; and her works in prose, as far as they assume the character of poetical inventions, may also be regarded as complete failures. Her smaller novels met with no success at all; and would now be unknown, as indeed they are very nearly, without the subsequent reputation of the writer. The same is true of *Delphine*, which is defective in every respect as a work of art, and having no other accidental merit to sustain it, is almost wholly worthless. The morality of it is far from being unexceptionable, notwithstanding the arguments alleged by the author in its defence in a separate essay. But, as was observed by the best critics at the time of its publication, a work that is not read with pleasure can never be dangerous. *Corinna* has higher claims; but if examined, its merit will not be found to lie in the poetical, but in the descriptive part; and as far as it is a work of invention, it is still a failure, though not to the same extent as *Delphine*. The character of the heroine is doubtless drawn with considerable spirit and produces effect, but this success does not seem to be the result of a general inventive talent. The personage is wholly out of nature; and under the pen of an actual observer and true painter, like Shakspeare or Scott, could only have been exhibited, in sorrow or in sport, as a half-maniac, if exhibited at all. It is in substance a picture by Madame de Stael of herself, with the expression of every feature heightened to the very verge of caricature; not, as may well be supposed, for the purpose of producing a ludicrous effect, but in consequence of the intense interest with which an ardent mind naturally expresses its habitual feelings. This deep interest, and the perfect knowledge which every individual has of his

own sentiments, supply, for this particular object, the defect of inventive talent. This seems also to be the extent of lord Byron's power of poetical creation, although he possesses in perfection the talent of writing in verse, which Madame de Stael wanted, and which it might be wished that the noble author would put a little more upon the stretch, than he has done in most of his poems. The failure of his late attempt in tragedy adds a positive confirmation to these negative proofs, that his inventive power has a very limited range. But with regard to *Corinna*, whatever may be the value of the principal character, it is not commonly considered as the chief merit of the work. The book is, after all, a description of Italy in a poetical form, drawn up with far more talent than is commonly exhibited in this class of writings. Descriptions of foreign countries, although in general very indifferently written, are still, from the inherent interest of the subject, among the most popular works which appear. It is easy, therefore, to imagine that a production of this class, recommended by the charm of eloquence, and replete with profound and philosophical views, could not fail to attract great attention. We find, accordingly, that the subsequent work on Germany, which is another Italy without the attempt at poetical invention, is not only more valuable, but at least equally if not more popular. We also find among the posthumous works, a dramatic essay on the story of Sappho, which shows what *Corinna* would have been without Italy, as the Germany shows what Italy would have been without *Corinna*. A true poetical talent would have treated this subject much more at ease in the form of a tragedy, than with the incumbrance of a great country to describe in the midst of all the sentimental agonies of an unrequited passion. The failure of Sappho proves very clearly that the loves of Oswald and *Corinna* would have excited but little interest without the associations of ancient greatness and glory, and the descriptions of natural and artificial beauty with which they are accompanied. A German poet, Grillparzer, has lately produced a tragedy on the subject of Sappho, which resembles the work of Madame de Stael so nearly in plot, that there must necessarily have been a communication between the two authors. Whether Grillparzer had seen her Sappho in manuscript, or whether after the publication of his, she undertook to treat the same subject in her own way, we are not informed.

As Madame de Stael, though possessed of sufficient taste and imagination to write with correctness and elegance, and even with poetical coloring, had not the essential requisites of real poetry, it is evident her success must have depended at least as much upon the substance of her compositions, as upon their form. Even fine versification, to produce its effect, must be sustained by a brilliant inventive talent, or a power of deep and original thought. Poetry properly requires the former; but the latter sometimes serves as a substitute, as in Pope, Goldsmith, and for the most part, Byron. Mere prose, however beautiful, demands still more imperiously, the aid of some substantial merit. This merit, as in poetry, may consist either in thought or invention. The novels of Richardson, Fielding and Scott, which, are real poems in prose, derive their principal value from invention. As Madame Stael wanted this talent, we find, as might be supposed, that her substantial excellence is thought. Philosophy, and not poetry, was her proper department; and in making a general estimate of her literary character it is still more important to look at it under this point of view than the other.

In the various walks of speculation, her reach of mind was very extensive; and if she treats some subjects more superficially than others, it seems to be rather from a want of inclination to engage in them, than of ability to sound them to the bottom. In the account she gives of the German philosophy, the analysis of intellect is lightly touched, and the conclusions in which she acquiesces much too hastily drawn. Without examining the system of Kant, she was seduced into an approval of it by the slight and wholly superficial colouring of plausibility which may be given to his leading principle. To do her justice, however, it should be observed, that she does not profess to have studied his theories, and after giving a general view of his leading principle in one of her chapters, she says little more than that there is an appearance of plausibility about it, which is true. Had she pushed her inquiries farther, she would have seen that this was only an appearance. But probably deriving her knowledge of the system from persons who approved it, she regards this plausibility as a presumption in favor of its truth. She was doubtless repelled by the obscurity in which the German metaphysicians have voluntarily shrouded their speculations, from entering into a thorough examination of them; and few, we fancy, will blame her for it,

very severely. Her favorite branches of philosophy were morals and politics, and upon these she reasons through all her writings with great freedom and ability.

In morals she embraced and supported, with singular zeal, the system which places the essence of virtue in the benevolent motive of the agent, and not in the useful tendency of the action. She treats with undisguised contempt the idea, that calculation can have any connexion with moral goodness; and regards feeling as the only elevated and really correct guide of conduct. Considered as a specimen of logical inquiry, there is a want of closeness and precision in her reasoning upon this, as upon most other points of philosophy. It is a part of the sublime and beautiful order of the universe, that good feelings tend to produce good consequences; and both these theories of virtue, abstractly considered, are therefore equally true. To deny that it is possible ever to do good by calculation, would be either to deny that good feelings tend to useful results, or to deny that we can perceive the connexion between them; neither of which points is at all tenable. There is, therefore, something of passion and even party in the ardor with which Madame de Stael supports the doctrine of sympathy, and attacks that of utility. But considering the state of moral philosophy in France at the time when she began to write, she is entitled to great credit for adopting these opinions. The French philosophers of the last century, in their analysis of the mind, almost wholly overlooked the existence of sympathetic feelings, or, as they are called by a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, with happy technical precision, *felt relations*, and resolved all sentiments into self-love. On this system, the promotion of our own advantage is the only natural motive of action; and as it does not seem to have been intended that we should act upon large views of distant consequences, it would on this supposition be natural, and of course right, that we should sacrifice the happiness of others to our own. Thus, these philosophers neglected the most beautiful feature in the order of Providence, which has provided for the general good, by giving to each individual a natural desire to promote the happiness of others, as well as his own, and has neutralised by a contrary principle, at least as strong, the malignant operation of pure self-love. This selfish philosophy had become universal in France, and had been brought into view in combination with the grossest and

most revolting materialism, to which it does not necessarily lead, but with which it may be easily connected. No modern French writer had espoused the contrary doctrine, at least in a dogmatical form, previously to Madame de Stael. Hence, although there was no real novelty in the doctrine of sympathy, she had something of the merit of philosophical discovery, in reviving it with so much zeal and vigor in a country where it had fallen into discredit. Her manner of explaining the doctrine is somewhat vague and incorrect, as we have observed above. Instead of contenting herself with reinstating the principle of sympathy in its rights, as co-operating with that of utility to produce the moral harmony of the universe, she denies with a sort of passion, that there can be any community between utility and goodness. Nor is she perfectly exact in her view of the value of sympathetic feelings. She seems very much disposed to give the character of virtue exclusively to acts that involve a sacrifice of our own interest to that of others, which is one step beyond the doctrine of pure disinterestedness, as a man may act without any view to his own interest, when he does not absolutely sacrifice it. This idea can hardly be admitted, although the promotion of the happiness of others, at the expense of our own, may well be considered as the highest act of virtue, since it is the most difficult. But these terms are used with very little precision by most other writers, and it was not the particular object of Madame de Stael to reform or fix the nomenclature of moral science, but to recommend a particular view of it to the public. By supporting the general doctrine of sympathy as she understood it, with her ardent and enthusiastic eloquence, she has done far more good, than would have been effected by a cold logical analysis, had it even been more exact in the details.

Although the speculations of Madame de Stael on this subject are somewhat deficient in precision, they are more profound and scientific than in any other department of philosophy. Metaphysics, as we have already seen, she has treated in a light and superficial way; and the critical remarks on various ancient and modern writers interspersed in her different works, though often very just and ingenious, and always indicative of a highly cultivated mind, do not seem to be the result of a philosophical investigation of the principles of taste. In politics her observations are almost wholly practi-

cal; and she has made no effort to improve in theory the science of government. It would be difficult, however, to cite any political writings of modern times, which display a more truly liberal and philosophical spirit. Whatever errors there may be in her judgments respecting persons or things, they are never tinctured with malignity or vitiated by narrow and partial views. Her point of observation is uniformly elevated, and her scope of vision is consequently large and expansive. She rises above the bewildering and poisonous atmosphere of vulgar party spirit, and is ready to allow, that the mistakes of her adversaries and her own juster views are alike the results of the ordinary motives that influence opinion and conduct. A false judgment is not, with her, the necessary consequence of a bitter malignant spirit, but an accidental effect of the frailty of human nature. Though strongly attached to liberal institutions and representative government, she can still, at times, discover merit in a monarch, or even in a minister: and what is still more extraordinary, though warmly French in her sentiments, she is an enthusiastic admirer of England and every thing English. The only two points in which she exhibits strong prejudice are her partiality for her father and her hatred of Bonaparte. The first of these feelings is too natural and amiable to be excepted against, though it gives unquestionably a false coloring to the early part of her work on the revolution. The other has so much foundation in justice, that it is rather difficult to say where honest indignation ends and personal hostility begins. In her judgments of other characters, she uniformly displays the most amiable feelings. She is candid and charitable in her notices of acknowledged errors, generous in her construction of doubtful passages, and unreservedly liberal in her commendation of excellence, intellectual and moral. We rise from the perusal of her works, even such as treat of those topics that are ordinarily employed to excite the worst and most malignant passions, with warmer benevolence and higher ideas of the nature and destiny of man. The writer who can produce these effects has little need to be ambitious of higher excellence.

At this last appearance of Madame de Staël before the critical tribunal, we have thought it not unprofitable to take this general survey of her literary character, without entering into a detailed examination of her particular works, the most important of which have been noticed, as they appeared, in this

journal. It will be seen by the tone of our remarks, that in the deductions we have made from her merit we have not been moved by a wish to depreciate her reputation. It is due to justice to say, that she was unsuccessful alike in poetical invention and execution, to both which qualities she made pretensions; that she has no claim to the praise of discovery in her philosophical researches; and is far from being remarkable for developing the truths made known by others with logical correctness and precision. But after these exceptions are made, there will remain for Madame de Stael praise enough to satisfy the ambition of more than common minds. She thinks freely and writes with power and elegance upon the most important subjects. This union of merits is itself extremely rare and remarkable. Experience shows, that even in an age of refinement, there are not more than three or four individuals in a generation who can fairly make pretensions to it. When we add to this the exhibition of high moral enthusiasm, and all the most exalted and amiable feelings, that appears in her works, we may well conclude that there are few literary reputations, though belonging technically to a higher class, of which the daughter of Necker had reason to be envious. One of the strongest proofs of her real merit is the fact, that her writings are uniformly criticised and judged without regard to the sex of the author. No attempt is made to palliate their deficiencies or exalt their excellence by suggesting that the praise or the blame must attach to a lady. This consent of the public, which has not been shown in any other case, sufficiently proves that Madame de Stael was not an extraordinary female writer, but an extraordinary writer. With all the merit of the present race of female authors in England, no one of them that we recollect has a right to claim an equality with her in this particular, far less to contest her superiority. Of these writers Miss More has the least *femality* (to use a coarse word, manufactured by Richardson,) in her mode of thinking and writing; but her style, though pure and manly, has no grace and little power, and her reach of mind is limited. Though remarkable as a female writer, she is quite secondary in the general literary scale. In the works of Miss Edgeworth, however interesting and valuable, we catch not unfrequently, a glimpse of the petticoat. She is much more at home in the *boudoir* and the ball room than in the cabinet or the court of justice, and manages Mrs Falconer far

more gracefully than the commissioner or his dignified and somewhat dull master. She knits up and unravels the lady-like network of a love intrigue with good success, though facile is, after all, not her strong point; but the specimens she has given us in Patronage of her diplomatic and professional address are at best of equivocal merit. To our taste, and we say it without meaning to disparage but rather to exalt her reputation, she is, most of all happy and engaging in the citizen's workshop and parlor and the Irish cottage. These are her fields of triumph and thrones of glory. Indeed as we feel the tears stealing to our eyes at the mere recollection of some of these scenes, and think of the true poetical talent with which she has hit off many of her characters, as for instance the charming Geraldine, we are half tempted to return upon our decision, and award her the preference over Madame de Stael. Let the palm rest between them, as it does in almost every thing, between the two illustrious nations to which they belong.

The posthumous works of Madame de Stael, to which our attention is now particularly called, will add nothing to the literary reputation of their author. They are made up of her unsuccessful attempts at poetry, whether in verse or prose, already adverted to, and of a fragment, entitled *Ten years in Exile*, which, had it been completed, would have given the history of an interesting period in her own life. In its present shape, it is of very little value as a literary composition. It is not only an unfinished fragment, but a great part of it had already been employed as materials for the composition of the work on the revolution. Under these circumstances, the expediency of publishing it may perhaps be looked on as doubtful; but on the whole, we cannot regret the determination which has given us, though in an imperfect and mutilated form, the *autobiography* of so fine a writer. There are also a few passages of great interest, and which will serve as contributions to the political history of the period. Neither this work, nor that of Madame de Necker, nor both together, furnish a satisfactory account of the life of Madame de Stael; so that a biography of her is still a *desideratum*. The work of Madame de Necker is indifferently executed. It is almost wholly made up of speculations upon the value of the writings of her heroine—speculations which are hardly of the first order, and which, if they were better, are not what is expected from the writer of her biogra-

phy. Every reader may reason, according to the measure of his talent, upon her literary character ; but her immediate friends alone are able to furnish us with the details of her history ; and this was, of course, the proper field for *Madame de Necker* to expatiate in. We propose to fill up the remainder of this article with a brief abstract of the narrative contained in the *Ten years in Exile*, illustrated by a few of the most interesting passages.

The narrative commences about the year 1800, and the first chapters are occupied in explaining and giving the reason of the aversion shown to *Madame de Stael* by *Bonaparte*, even at this period, and his subsequent persecution of her. She affirms that her principal crime in his view was her love of liberty ; and afterwards mentions some particular circumstances, apparently of no great importance, in which her influence was directed against his authority and administration. These motives of dislike may have had their weight ; but we think that either from self-deception or for some other reason, she has not stated the real cause so explicitly as she might have done, although she has said enough to leave little doubt in the mind of an observing reader. Whatever may have been the feelings of the first consul towards her, it does not appear that she was in any respect molested for a long period after his elevation to the supreme power. She resided at Paris, and employed and amused herself in any way she thought proper, until about the year 1802. At that time a sort of conspiracy was formed against the government of *Bonaparte*, in which *Madame de Stael* took a part, and of which she would seem, even from her own account of it, which is however very imperfect, to have been one of the principal managers. The following paragraph contains the whole of what she says upon the subject.

‘A number of generals and senators formed a party at that time, and addressed themselves to general *Bernadotte*, with a view of ascertaining from him, if nothing could be done to check the progress of the usurpation, then so rapidly advancing. *Bernadotte* proposed several plans, all founded in legislative measures, being opposed in principle to any step of a different kind. But such measures required an act of at least a part of the senate ; and not a member could be found who dared to concur in such a proceeding. While this dangerous negotiation was in progress, I was frequently in company with

general Bernadotte and his friends. This was more than enough to ruin me, if these plans were brought to light. Bonaparte was heard to say, that the persons who frequented my house always left it with sentiments less favorable to him than those with which they entered it. Finally, he found it expedient to consider me as the only person criminal among many others, who were much more so than I was, but whom he could not so conveniently break with.'

This incident explains, we think, very sufficiently and satisfactorily the persecution of Madame de Stael by Napoleon, as well as his known and avowed dislike of Bernadotte. It appears from this account, however brief and imperfect, that a conspiracy against the power of the first consul was concerted with the privity and concurrence of Madame de Stael, and that the meetings were probably held at her house. It is evident that Bonaparte obtained information of the plot: and supposing it to have been managed with such prudence as to afford no pretext for proceeding against the principal active conspirators, it was natural and even justifiable that he should provide for his future safety by removing from the capital the person, whose conversation probably fomented the intrigue, and whose house was the rendezvous of those engaged in it. In saying that this step was justifiable, we shall of course not be understood to imply that an attempt to check the usurpations of Bonaparte, even by violent means, was criminal. It was doubtless on the contrary highly creditable to its authors, and if successful, might have been very advantageous to the state. But a person who adventures in so treacherous and doubtful a field as that of conspiracy, ought to be aware of the character of such enterprises, and not bewail his fate too loudly, if discovery ends in nothing worse than exile. It is idle to complain of any government, however violent and unjust, for proceeding with severity against its real and ascertained enemies; and there would be no merit in attempting to overthrow such a government, if failure and discovery were not to be attended with personal inconvenience. The part taken by Madame de Stael in this conspiracy was, therefore, as we imagine, her real crime, and not her passion for liberty in the abstract, nor even her refusal to flatter the emperor in her writings. In fact, the distinguished literary characters of the time, though of opposite political sentiments, were rather courted than persecuted by Napoleon :

and some, whose opinions were still more hostile to him than those of Madame de Stael, but who had the prudence to abstain from overt acts, as for example M. de Châteaubriand, resided very quietly at Paris throughout his whole reign. It is also precisely at this period, as she herself admits, that the violent proceedings of Bonaparte against her commenced. Immediately upon the detection of the intrigue in question, she voluntarily retired to Switzerland, doubtless with the view of providing for her safety, and did not attempt for some time to return to Paris. The next year, thinking that Bonaparte, who was then busily engaged in making preparations for his descent upon England, had forgotten her, but still not choosing to trust herself at Paris, she ventured to take a country house in the neighborhood of that capital, and occasionally to make her appearance there. 'I confess,' she observes here with a singular simplicity, 'I confess that I do not see what inconvenience it would have been to the First Consul, had he permitted me to remain at this retreat in voluntary exile.' The inconvenience is plain enough. A person, who has already organized one conspiracy, can hardly be trusted with safety in a situation, which affords an opportunity of organizing another. The most decided enemies of Bonaparte can hardly deny that his conduct in this respect, was perfectly reasonable; and it is evident that in confining his precautions to banishment from Paris, without recurring to the severer measures of imprisonment or death, which were nevertheless familiar to him, he gave clear proofs of a wish to avoid the public scandal of treating too harshly a woman of distinguished genius. She received, however, an order to remove forty leagues from the capital; and it was at this time that she determined on travelling in Germany.

Upon the view we have here taken of the relations between Madame de Stael and Bonaparte, according to the account she has given of them herself, it appears that her complaints of persecution were entirely groundless. She seems to have had a vague notion that the emperor was bound to treat her, at the very moment when she was aiming a dagger at his heart, with all the gallantry and regard due to her sex and genius. She engages in a secret attempt to overturn by violence a powerful military government, and when detected, complains with bitterness that she is not allowed to enjoy, as before, all her usual comforts. A person who had composed a tragedy upon

the history of lady Jane Grey, ought to have known that slighter offences than hers had brought much loftier heads to the block, at the order of tyrants less remorseless than Bonaparte.

Few particulars are given of her travels in Germany, the matter having been treated in her separate work on that country. She was accompanied on this journey* by Benjamin Constant. She resided three months at Weimar, and there made the acquaintance of Göthe, Wieland, and Schiller, of whom she has given her opinion at large in her *Germany*. At this place she also received intelligence of the illness of her father; and immediately returned in haste to Copet, but did not reach that place in time to be present at his death. In the year 1804, she published a collection of M. Necker's manuscripts, with a notice of his life, and then to console her sorrows, undertook the journey to Italy, the fruits of which appeared in *Corinna*. At this period she made another attempt to return to Paris. As a preliminary step, she established herself at the permitted distance of forty leagues; and soon after, by the indulgence of Fouché, then minister of police, she was allowed to approach within twelve. But the publication of *Corinna* awakened anew the attention of Bonaparte, and she received immediately after another sentence of exile. The intervening time between this period, and her final departure from Switzerland in 1812, was passed principally at Copet, and employed in the composition of the work on *Germany*. There is an interruption in this part of the memoirs; and the narrative is continued by the insertion of a brief notice of the principal facts written by the editor. The son, as is not unnatural, takes part with the mother in her complaints of her unjust persecution by Napoleon. After finishing the work on *Germany*, she made another approach to the capital of France to superintend the printing of it. The book, as is well known, was suppressed, when it was all printed and just on the eve of publication, and the disappointed author returned once more in sadness to Switzerland. Here she was subjected to so strict a *surveillance*, and her domestic comfort was disturbed by such various molestations, that the residence became intolerable to her; and she determined, finally, to make her escape, and to pass by way of Austria, Russia, and the North of Europe, into England. After much preliminary doubt and hesitation, she finally attempted this

scheme, and effected it with very little difficulty and no obstruction on the part of the French government. The account of this journey occupies the greater part of the narrative in the work we are reviewing; but is only brought down to her arrival at Stockholm. The passages of most interest contain her observations at St Petersburg. The following account of her presentation to the emperor Alexander is curious in itself, and still more so, from the light, which subsequent events have thrown upon the character of this sovereign.

‘At length I saw this monarch, absolute by the laws and usages of his country, but so moderate by his own inclination. I was first presented to the empress Elizabeth; and she appeared to me like the guardian angel of Russia. While I was conversing with the empress, a door opened, and the emperor Alexander did me the honor to come in and speak to me. The first thing, that struck me in him, was an expression of goodness and of dignity, so strong, that the two qualities appeared to be inseparable, and to form but one. I was also much impressed by the noble simplicity with which he immediately began to converse upon the great interests of Europe. I have always regarded as a sign of mediocrity, the unwillingness to talk upon matters of importance, which has become habitual with all the European sovereigns. They are afraid to utter a word which has any real meaning. The emperor Alexander talked with me, on the contrary, as the statesmen of England would have done, who trust to their own strength, and not the external pomp and circumstance of their offices. This emperor, whom Napoleon attempted to degrade in the public opinion, is a man of remarkable talent and information; and I doubt whether he could find in his whole empire, a minister more capable than himself of directing the public affairs. He did not conceal from me the regret he felt, for the admiration which he had publicly exhibited of Napoleon. His ancestor, Peter III, was seduced into a similar enthusiasm for Frederic II. In these illusions, created by extraordinary characters, there is always something generous, however unfortunate may be the consequences. The emperor described with great ability the effect produced upon him by his conversations with Bonaparte, in which the latter often made the most inconsistent remarks; as if thinking that all would be received with admiration, without any feeling of their contradictory character. He also communicated to me the Machiavelian instructions which Napoleon thought proper to give him. “Observe, how I take care to excite quarrels among my generals and ministers, that they may reveal to me each other’s faults. I keep up about me a continual jealousy by the manner in which I treat them. Sometimes one thinks himself preferred,

and then another ; so that nobody can ever be sure of my favor." What a vulgar and vicious theory is this ! Will there never appear a man superior to this man, who can prove its falsity ? The only thing wanting to the sacred cause of morality is to be attended in this world with great and brilliant success. One who duly appreciates the dignity of this cause would, without doubt, feel a pleasure in sacrificing to it every other consideration ; but those presumptuous souls who regard vice as a proof of sound and deep thinking, require to be taught by example, that if immorality is sometimes compatible with talent, genius may also be the attendant of virtue. I was satisfied of the good faith of the emperor Alexander in his relations with Napoleon ; and was convinced at the same time, that he would never imitate the conduct of the unfortunate German sovereigns, by signing a peace with one who is equally the enemy of sovereigns and nations. A noble mind will never be deceived twice by the same person. Alexander gives and withdraws his confidence with great reflection. His youth and personal advantages threw upon him, at the beginning of his reign, some suspicions of frivolity ; but he is serious, like all who have suffered. Alexander expressed to me his regret at not being a great captain. In answer to so noble a proof of modesty, I remarked, that sovereigns were even more rare than generals ; and that to keep up the spirit of the nation, by his example, was the most important of victories, and the first of the kind that had been gained in these struggles. The emperor spoke to me with enthusiasm of his people and their future destinies. He intimated the desire, which he is generally known to feel, of improving the condition of the peasants who are still in slavery. "Sire," said I, "your character is a constitution to your empire, and your conscience is the security of it." "If this were true," he replied, "I should still be only a fortunate accident." What a noble remark ! The first of the kind, I fancy, that an absolute monarch ever pronounced. What virtue it requires in a despot to pass such a sentence upon despotism ! and what virtue too, it requires never to abuse power in a country where public opinion is so far from demanding moderation, that the people are almost astonished at its exercise.'

Late events have shown very clearly, that whatever confidence the conscience of the emperor Alexander may inspire in the minds of his subjects, it is no sufficient security against the abuse of his influence over foreign powers. The representation here given of his disposition at a preceding period, towards Bonaparte, is tinged with a favorable coloring, which nothing could excuse, but the sympathy naturally inspired by his situation at the time when this passage was written. A

mind, which could be seduced by the glare of military success, encircling the name of Bonaparte, into a passionate admiration of his character, and a public approval of his measures, by cooperation, even to the invasion of Spain, must be strangely wanting in firmness ; and a conscience which can lend itself to such illusions is a poor security for the rights of a great nation. That Peter III. felt a similar enthusiasm for the great Frederic may be true ; but the example is not very flattering to the emperor Alexander, who probably aspires to a higher reputation than that of his besotted and miserable great grandfather ; while, in order to defend him on the authority of this instance, it would be necessary to suppose him as much weaker than Peter, as Bonaparte was more unprincipled, and less accomplished than the hero of Brandenburgh. We can hardly exculpate Madame de Stael, in this point, of intentional flattery, a heinous offence in so warm a champion of liberal principles and generous feelings. We are not, however, disposed to deny that her general idea of the emperor's moral character is substantially just. We believe his disposition to be naturally good and generous, and are ready to admit that even in supporting the late invasion of Italy, he did not wilfully sin against his conscience, but really believed himself to be doing God service. His honesty in these measures was of the same description with that, which lighted the faggots for Cranmer, and hung the witches at Salem. Minds much stronger than the emperor's have been subdued by the influence of prevailing opinions ; and a powerful military despot, who is led to trample on the rights of other nations by a fanatical zeal for what he believes to be a good cause, is, in our opinion, a much more dangerous person, than a sovereign merely ambitious of greatness and glory. The proceedings of the former will probably be found to be more violent, more unjust, and perhaps more cruel. The conscience of an individual is, therefore, no sufficient guarantee for any rights whatever, and it is the great advantage of liberal institutions and representative governments, that they protect the people, alike from the wilful oppression of profligate rulers, and the equally fatal errors of the well meaning. These institutions throw upon the march of government the broad daylight of public opinion. Public opinion itself may, at times, be erroneous ; but it is the last tribunal to which an appeal can be made on this side the grave ; and where the form of

government allows it a full and free expression, its counsels may generally be followed with confidence by honest rulers, as they must be obeyed, however reluctantly, by all. While with these reservations we adopt the opinion of Madame de Stael respecting the moral character of the emperor of Russia, we find ourselves unable to agree with her, in pronouncing him a man of remarkable talent and information. Every thing has, doubtless, been done for his mind, which could be effected by the most careful and judicious course of training; and he is much superior to the great majority of persons belonging to the same social class; but we are not aware that he has exhibited any clear proofs of possessing great intellectual energy; and he certainly has given many of wanting it.

There is little novelty in the remarks of Madame de Stael upon the general character of the Russians. She was forcibly struck with the high civilization of the nobles, and the rude barbarity of the general mass. Her representation of the character of both classes is perhaps rather more favorable than strict justice would admit, but is in the main, substantially just. The following passages contain some of her reflections on the Russian character, and may perhaps be interesting at a time when the public attention is so strongly directed towards this vast empire, and when the important part which it is destined to play in the future history of Europe is becoming every day more and more perceptible.

‘No civilized nation is so nearly savage as Russia; and even the nobles when they possess mental energy, exhibit the faults and the virtues of unreclaimed nature. Much praise has been bestowed on the celebrated remark of Diderot, “*The Russians rotted before they ripened*;” but the observation is wholly false. Their vices, with some exceptions, are those of barbarism, and not of corruption. *A Russian wish would blow up a city*, said a man of talent, and when they desire to accomplish any object good or bad, they are alternately furious and cunning. Their character is not changed by the rapid civilization introduced by Peter. Hitherto it has only polished their manners, and fortunately for them, they remain what we call barbarians, that is, they act from feelings, often generous, but always instinctive; and employ reflection only in the choice of means, and never in that of ends. I say fortunately for them, not because I think the state of barbarism desirable, but because this native energy of character is the only substitute in nations for the reflecting and deliberate power of freedom.

‘The people, it may be said, are in slavery; how then can they be supposed to have a character. Certainly I need not say, that every enlightened man desires to see them raised above this situation, and the emperor Alexander more than any body else. But the slavery of the Russians does not correspond in its effects, with the idea we form of it in the west. This relation is not like that which existed under the feudal system, when a conquering nation had imposed severe laws upon a conquered one. It is more like the state of family servitude among the ancients. There is no middling class (*tiers état*) in Russia. This is a great evil as regards the progress of literature and the arts, which generally flourish but in this portion of society; but the absence of any intervening order between the nobles and the slaves, produces a greater attachment between them than would otherwise exist. The distance appears very great from one of these orders to the other, because they are two extremes, unconnected by any intermediate link; but this very circumstance brings them in reality much more frequently into contact. This state of society is very unfavorable to the improvement of the higher classes, but not to the happiness of the lower. In countries where there is no representative government, and where the monarch makes himself the law which he is to execute, the people are often more debased by the sacrifice of independence and opinion, required by such a political constitution, than they are in this empire, where a few simple ideas of religion and patriotism serve to maintain the influence of a small number of lords over a vast uncivilized mass. The immense extent of the Russian empire prevents the despotism of the nobles from pressing as heavily as it otherwise would, upon the peasants. A religious and a military spirit are also generally prevalent, and we may readily overlook some deficiencies in a country where two such excellent motives of conduct are in steady operation. A man of great talent remarked, that Russia resembled the plays of Shakspeare, where every thing which is not sublime is faulty; and every thing which is not faulty is sublime. This observation is perfectly just; but in the very difficult crisis which existed at the time when I visited this people, it was impossible not to admire their energetic resistance to the invader, and their cheerful resignation to the necessary sacrifices. Where such virtues were actually exhibited, it was hardly possible to notice the faults which might have been remarked at other times.’

We quote these passages without pretending to adopt or contest the opinions; but merely with a view of communicating to the reader the sentiments of so enlightened an observer on a very important subject.

The determined and bitter hostility of Madame de Stael to

the now departed military tyrant of her country, is a remarkable feature in this work, as in the one on the French revolution. It is expressed in this in a still more unqualified form than in the other, partly, perhaps, because the rude lines of a first sketch had not been corrected and softened for the public eye, and partly because the work was written at the period of the emperor's worst and wildest extravagance, and when the writer was suffering strongly herself under the 'continual stroke' of his iron sceptre. When she published the work on the French revolution, her great enemy had already lost his power; and even then it began to be perceived, that there were other rulers in the world not wholly indisposed to play in their turn the game of tyranny. Under these circumstances she was able to treat the character and history of Bonaparte with more coolness and judgment; and though there are still strong symptoms of personal feeling, we perceive something of the dignity and impartiality of history. In the present work a tone of passion and petulance prevails throughout on the subject; and it tends very strongly to defeat the unfavorable impression which might otherwise be made by the facts related and the opinions given. This circumstance might have been considered as a reason among others, for suppressing the work out of regard for the author's reputation.

Independently of the unfortunate tone of most of the observations upon that point, the substance of them is far from being always correct or even plausible. There is too obvious an effort to degrade the character of Napoleon for talent, as well as to inculcate his motives and conduct. If we merely look at his political and military successes, it is evident that the production of such effects, in an age like this, demands intellectual powers of the highest order. An Attila or a Gengiskan may ravage half the globe, without any qualities but brutal courage and a wild barbarian energy of mind and body; but to establish a dominion, though merely military, over an enlightened continent like Europe, is an achievement of a different sort; and supposes, in addition to the virtues of a great commander, a natural dignity and elevation of mind. Is it possible that a vulgar spirit should raise itself, by its own efforts, from the lowest ranks in the army to the throne of one of the most powerful and civilized nations in Europe; and should then push the greatness of this nation to a point which it never reached before, and extend its influence over a great

part of the continent ? But, independently of the proofs, drawn from these prodigious results of the naturally elevated character of their author, he has given others in abundance still more direct and decisive. Was it a vulgar spirit that projected and completed the noblest code of laws that the world has yet seen, as much superior to the undigested mass of the Justinian collection, as the universe is to the chaos out of which it was formed ? Was it a vulgar spirit, that brought together with so perfect a taste the finest specimens of the arts from all other countries, and opened them to the world with such princely magnificence in the unrivalled gallery of the Louvre ? Finally, was it a vulgar spirit that could find time amid the various and numberless occupations of the most active life that man ever led, to take an interest in almost every department of knowledge, and to obtain a sufficient acquaintance with all, to be able to converse upon them with satisfaction and credit ?

Bonaparte was certainly little in some points, as in the importance which he attached towards the close of his reign to the childish foppery of court etiquette. But almost every character is, to a certain extent, a union of inconsistencies ; and the prevailing vices of this personage were of the exactly opposite description. Ambition of the wildest and most extravagant stamp was the ruling passion of his mind. Had this disposition been controlled, in its practical operation, by the influence of moral feelings or principles, it might have produced the happiest results for its possessor and the world. But morality, whether founded in principle or feeling, seems to have been a thing of which he had no notion whatever. We find no traces in his history of benevolent sentiments in any of their various forms ; and he trampled under foot the endearing relations of blood and birth, with the same savage indifference which he showed for the just rights of individuals, with whom he was unconnected. His mother was not allowed to sit in his reception room ; and his brothers were persecuted by him with such relentless severity, that some of them fled from his presence, and the rest were ready to expire under its terrors. Lucien, whose influence contributed so much to give him his power, found it expedient to retire into voluntary exile. To serve his political purposes he divorced and broke the heart of an amiable and affectionate wife, who had been his companion and benefactress in his humbler fortunes ;

and he imposed on his brothers, sacrifices of the same kind, to serve not their views, but his own. Jerome must be divorced, and Louis must marry to gratify his ambition or something worse. The light in which he viewed his confidential agents and officers has been seen, in his conversation above cited with the emperor Alexander. In this total deficiency of natural affection in all its forms, he differs disadvantageously from the two most distinguished conquerors of antiquity; and approaches more nearly to the great Frederic, whose heart was also of the consistency of one of his own cannon balls. The only intellectual vice of Bonaparte was extravagance; and it was this that caused his ruin. With all his contempt for the rights and feelings of others he might have maintained himself to the last, and transmitted his sceptre to a long line of descendants, had he known how to temper the wildness of his ambition, with even a moderate infusion of good sense and discretion. This defect in his understanding, had been observed by those who were acquainted with him, before he had betrayed its existence to the public, by the incredible follies that marked the close of his reign. General Moreau, as we are told by Madame de Stael, observed at his residence on the Delaware, upon hearing of the failure of some attempt at conspiracy in France, 'the French have not the art of managing this sort of business; but there is one conspirator to whose machinations he must ultimately fall a victim,—I mean himself.'

If Madame de Stael has shown a want of cool judgment in attempting to underrate the talents of Napoleon, she is also not always correct in estimating the moral character of his particular actions; but dwells perhaps with an emphasis not wholly just on actions either of doubtful authenticity or disputed morality. This remark, however, must not be made without exception, for in regard to some separate acts of an atrocious character, which have been attributed to Bonaparte with greater or less degrees of probability, she observes with propriety, that as the correctness of these statements is after all doubtful, to insist much upon them, while it shows a strong sentiment of hostility, has a tendency rather favorable than otherwise to the general reputation of Napoleon, because it seems to argue that the acts, which can be laid to his charge with certainty, are not heinous enough for his condemnation.

In reality, however, the undisputed crimes of this personage

are sufficiently enormous to relieve the bitterest of his foes, did they know how to unite even a moderate share of discretion with their animosity, from the necessity of inventing new ones or insisting upon such as are doubtful. The first and greatest of the number was the employment of the influence he had acquired by his military successes to destroy the liberty of his country. The fortune of France, at least for a length of time, was in his hands. It was in his power to establish her political institutions upon solid foundations, or to build up his own false greatness upon the ruins of every other interest. He chose the latter course, and preferred the part of Cromwell to that of Washington. His second crime, scarcely inferior in magnitude to the first, was the abuse of this ill-gotten greatness to the destruction of the independence and welfare of every foreign nation within his reach. These are the acts for which his memory will be execrated by the friends of liberty, as long as liberty shall have a friend; and while European courtiers are wasting their sorrows upon the untimely grave of a single unfortunate prince, the wise and good of all countries and ages, with whom a prince is no more than any other man, will only lament his fate in common with that of millions, more unfortunate and more innocent, whose lives and happiness were sacrificed by an individual to the vain phantom of military glory.

One of the great singularities in the every way singular fortunes of this personage, was the lingering constancy with which the affection of the people still hung about him to the last, notwithstanding his early and shameless defection from the cause of freedom, and his subsequent intolerable abuse of power. The friends of liberty throughout the world, especially the less enlightened among them, and those whose opinions are rather the result of impulse than reflection, regarded him, even in the days of his worst excesses, with the sort of distressing interest, which a lover feels for a fair and faithless mistress, who has forfeited his esteem, without having wholly lost her hold upon his affections. A sentiment of this kind was observable in the language of some of the most respectable members of the British parliament; and traces of it might even be perceived in the views of the most decidedly republican portion of our republican community. It was a remarkable thing to see the character and cause of a military despot treated with a sort of indulgence, by so large a part

of a nation, which lives and moves and has its being in the atmosphere of liberty and equality. But here, as elsewhere, men could not wholly separate in their imagination the past from the present; they could not forget at once that Bonaparte, in his earliest and best and happiest days, had been the asserter of the good cause against the Holy Alliance of his time; and that he had trampled upon many a diadem before he stooped to pick up one of them, and disgrace his manly brow with its childish finery. Even after he had assumed the disguise of an emperor, they could not help feeling that he was originally one of themselves; and when they saw him pouring out his fury upon other established governments, from whose abuses they had formerly suffered, they did not realise, in a moment, that his own was infinitely more tyrannical than any that preceded it. The very enormity of his treason against the cause of liberty prevented the people from viewing it, at first, in its true light. It seemed impossible in the nature of things, that the noblest of her champions should have sunk at once, from the loftiest heights of glory to the lowest depth of moral degradation. They could not help flattering themselves, although against the evidence of their senses, that there was some deception in this apparent apostacy, that the general good required that the cause of the people should be entrusted, for a time, to an arbitrary dictator, and that, after beating down all opposition and rooting out every where the last vestiges of ancient abuses, this mighty champion would resign his truncheon of office, return to the ranks from which he had emerged, and pay his vows again at the altar of freedom. Such, or similar to these, were the willing delusions of many true patriots in various countries. They were not wholly dissipated at the time of the fall of Bonaparte; and the compassion naturally inspired by so strange a reverse of fortune, contributed to sustain and even heighten this singular sort of interest: so that it continued to attend him even in his last lonely retreat. Liberty, remembering the ardent zeal and brilliant exploits of her youthful hero, did not disdain to cheer the dark hours of the wretched and fallen apostate from her cause, with a few lingering gleams of affection. Lord Holland, and some other enthusiastic partisans of popular principles, raised their voices in favor of Bonaparte in the British parliament, when every body else had deserted him except his own family and the faithful companions of his

exile : and the care and kindness of these generous souls contributed something to the comfort of his latter years. If a heart like his were susceptible of remorse and shame, such treatment would have been far more cutting to him than the persecution of his avowed enemies.

We have been led into these observations in part by the occasional interest now attached to the name and character of Bonaparte, in consequence of his death ; an event, the very indifference of which, in a political point of view, makes it more remarkable, than it would have been under any other circumstances. We trust that we have not offended the spirit of Madame de Stael in devoting a few pages to the memory of her great antagonist, since she expresses a hope, in the commencement of her memoirs, that in speaking of herself she shall often be able to withdraw the reader's attention from her own affairs. However unfortunate for her peace may have been her connexion with the history of Bonaparte, we are not sure that it is not one of the circumstances which will contribute most powerfully to maintain her hold upon the attention of posterity. She has indeed expressed this opinion herself, in a letter which she wrote to him upon the occasion of his first order of exile. She observes, ' You are giving me a sad celebrity—I shall occupy one of the pages in your history.'



ART. IX.—*Uebersicht aller bekannten Sprachen und ihrer Dialekte.*—*A Survey of all the known Languages and their Dialects.* By Frederick Adelung, Counsellor of State, &c. &c. &c. 8vo. pp. xiv—186. St Petersburg. 1820.

THIS work has already been briefly noticed in a journal printed in another part of the United States;* but the importance of the subject, as well as the value of the work itself, would render it inexcusable in us to omit giving some account of its contents, for the information of readers in this quarter of our country. We are the more induced to do this, as we have not yet seen any notice of the work in those *English* journals, which have the most general circulation among us. The subject of our article will, therefore, have the attraction

* The Rev. Mr Schaeffer's *German Correspondent*, Nos vii and viii.